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THE INTELLIGENT FELLOW.

SOME men are men of knowledge: others are only intelligent fellows. Your man of knowledge is deep in all the more important departments of mundane science; your intelligent fellow cares for nothing of the kind. He is possibly aware that the sun is in the centre of our system, and that the perpetual motion has not yet been discovered; but he never thinks of such matters. It is to the minutiae of the things immediately around him that he devotes his chief attention. He knows all about the personal history of every body who lives in the same place with himself; he has every piece of local news before any body else. There is a confident smartness in his appearance as he walks the streets of his native city, that seems to boast of a familiar acquaintance with each stone of the pavement he treads on. You can see, from the peculiar tremulous snappiness of his upper lip, and the quickness of his eye, that he is up to every thing and every body. In company, of course, he is an infallible dictionary of reference on every small topic that is discussed. If, in some large town at a distance from your ordinary residence, you chance to attend a pretty large dinner-party, the chatter of the intelligent fellow of the place throws you quite into the background. You had supposed yourself to know something; but now you find you are quite ignorant of the merits of the newly-appointed professor, and altogether at a loss on the subject of the projected water-company. In these affairs the intelligent fellow fairly sends you back to school.

There is one intelligent fellow whom I have been accustomed to meet at almost every assemblage of the people, in and around London, for the better part of twenty years, and with whose name and condition I am yet entirely unacquainted. This gentleman appears to go to such assemblages upon the same footing as the show-folk and the conjurors, not, indeed, to make money, as they do, but yet to exercise his vocation—his vocation as an intelligent fellow. As you press through the crowd at a review in Hyde Park, you are sure to come upon him—a vivacious, shabbyish sort of person, in a faded green surcoat and white-brown neckcloth, very busily engaged in talking to a crowd of spectators, who have gathered around him to learn who's who, and are evidently under great wonder at the universality of his knowledge. Not a regiment marches past but he can tell you its name—its number—and all about it. "That's the 77th—green facings turned up with buff—drummers' coats yellow—Badajos on the button—only the first battalion, however; the second is at Malta, and there is a recruiting party at Perth—suffered dreadfully in the West Indies." Not an officer appears but he can tell his name, and give an outline of his services—trace his descent, and whisper the reason of his last promotion. "Ah, there's the duke," he cries, and all eyes are turned in the direction of his own. "He wears well; yet he is not the man he was in fifteen. I remember him that year when he came into the House of Commons to receive their thanks"—and so on without end. If he be an army-list at a review, he is a peerage at a race. Should you be there so fortunate as to get within the circle amongst which he is scattering his information, you will in half an hour learn more about the nobility of England, their respective ages, revenues, connections, and personal characters, than you could from Burke or Debrett in fifty years. Ask about any one you please, and you have all that you could wish to know in two minutes. Not only can he state the revenue of each peer, but from what source, soil, mine, or canal, it is derived. He can tell of every lord, whether he is liberal or narrow in his expenditure—

whether he is *dipped*, and to what extent—his peculiar treatment of domestics and tradesmen—whether he or his lady was most to blame in "that late unhappy affair," and whether his lordship is or is not a friend of the ministry. He hesitates no more about a date or any other arithmetical matter, than about a common fact. He seems to have the whole pension-list off by heart—the sum given to each person, the reasons why given, the minister by whom, and the how long enjoyed. Yet, while his audience can scarcely comprehend how one small head should carry all he knows, the intelligent fellow preserves a face of perfect unconcern, and seems no more to appreciate the information he is scattering around him, than that other poor fellow appreciates the dentist's handbills he has been employed to distribute amongst the crowd.

Going to Ascot this year, I had scarcely alighted when I observed the intelligent fellow standing about fifteen yards from the right front angle of the royal stand, stiff as a soldier on parade, but with his keen black eye fixed askance on their majesties, and the usual group of green-horn listeners collected around him. He was discoursing on the elegant simplicity of the queen's dress, which, he was scrupulous to mention, was all of British manufacture. He had also a few observations of a somewhat delicate nature about young Prince George's complexion, which he connected in a mysterious manner with the matrimonial fate of the Princess Victoria. He knew every one of the nobles and officers around the king, and could tell in what exact degree they were favourites or otherwise with his majesty. He was also able to give a minute account of the attempt of Daniel Collins on the king's life at a former race, together with sundry traditional notices respecting the attempts of Peg Nicholson and Hatfield on the life of George III. "Royal family all brave, sir—know not what fear is. Old King George was never in the least put about by either knife or pistol. Stood up in the front of the box, immediately after Hatfield had fired, and told the people not to hurt the poor man. Duke of York, too—stood Colonel Lennox's fire like a post. Did not care how often he might fire. All brave people, sir." He had great fault to find, however, with the style in which the present king appeared at Ascot. "Too bad, too bad," he exclaimed, as he saw the royal cortege come up the course; "George IV. would not have come up in this style, no, not for his kingdom, sir. To have beheld the cortege of that magnificent prince on this day, would have done your heart good. But this man, sir—good honest fellow, too, and perhaps the best of the family—knows nothing about it. And, look you, gentlemen, to the slovenly state of the course itself. Why, had George IV. perceived but a straw across his path, it would have shocked him beyond expression; perhaps he would not have come next year. And look to the equipages throughout. There is scarce a turn-out on the grounds, worthy of the rank of its owner. Our nobility, sir, look to the highest quarter for an example, and this nasty economy system has ruined all. The ambition of our nobility is decidedly on the wane. I don't think I have seen a tolerable turn-out this season, except my Lord Chesterfield's—to be sure, he inherits his taste from his ancestors."

Wherever our intelligent fellow took up his stand for a few minutes, the well-informed chatter which he seemed incapable of restraining, was as sure to collect a crowd, as a preaching in Cheapside. They would be standing four deep in front, all eagerly drinking in his discourse, though it seemed quite the same thing to him whether he had or had not any listeners. I thought it strange that, with all his information about

men and things, he appeared to care little or nothing about the race. He never criticised the horses, or expressed the least anxiety about their comparative success. Betting on the issue was altogether out of the question. Yet he was sure to know which noble or gentleman had won, and how far the rest were prepared to bear their losses. The conjurors and the show-folk were as much beneath his notice as the horses. He never cast an eye upon them. He was anxious, however, about the equipages. I observed him at a subsequent period of the day, very deeply engaged in studying the crests and coats armorial. He was very indignant at a cat's paw having been substituted on one carriage for a griffin's, and threatened to give information on the subject in the proper quarter. My wonder is, that, with all this devout attention to things connected with the nobility, he seems, as far as dress can testify, to belong to the very opposite extremity of society. He looks like one who has not known a regular income or a regular diet for twenty years. I am at an absolute loss to conceive how he can maintain even the lank form and shabby exterior which he presents. From ten in the morning till seven at night, have I watched this same intelligent fellow, and, while all others were feasting, not a bite or a drop ever crossed his lips. Still his spirits and volubility knew no flag—still was he ever ready to satisfy the inquiring stranger—still was he ever commenting on the scene before him. The how and whereabouts of this man remain a mystery to me till this hour. I at one time thought him a half-pay officer; but then it was inconsistent with such a character to display so marked an homage for the aristocracy. Could he be a *victim*?—no, for, in my hearing, he steadily refused various cups of ale offered to him by rustic strangers whom he had enlightened. Might he be a discharged cook or footman? That could not well be either, for, though an admirer of the great, he always spoke of them as of his equals. It was also curious, that, though he knew every thing about every body, I never observed him bow, nod, or touch his hat to any one: he seemed a man without friends or acquaintance in the world. Wearing one day with conjectures which ended in nothing, I asked the coachman who had brought me to Ascot, if he could tell any thing about him. "No, sir," said Jarvis, fixing his eye upon the individual to whom I pointed, "nor does any one else. All I know is, that he is a *nomenclator*, and I've seen him here these fifteen years." A *nomenclator*! the word was like a flash of lightning. I thought I saw the whole idea. But in a moment all was again darkness. What was a *nomenclator*? I could trace an appropriateness in the word to the habits of the man; but was this what Jarvis meant? I feared not. On another occasion I had almost obtained a clue to his character and circumstances. Eating a bun one day in a baker's shop in the vicinity of London, who should come in but the intelligent fellow? He bought a couple of penny biscuits, which, being wrapped in paper, he popped unostentatiously into his pocket. Then drawing from his breast a handkerchief, he wiped his forehead, took a modest survey of the individuals who, like ourselves, were munching at the counter, bade the shopkeeper good morning, and was off. At the first impulse I thought of following the intelligent fellow to his den; but, recollecting another occasion on which I had hunted a brother of the fraternity for three hours without earthing him, the notion was scarcely formed, when it was abandoned. One chance remained.

"Pray, sir," said I, addressing the baker, "do you know any thing of that gentleman?"

"Very little, sir; very little indeed."

"May I inquire if you know in what manner he lives?"

"Very poorly, sir, I believe."

"Perhaps you are not aware from what source his livelihood is derived?"

"No, sir, I do not; nor does he altogether know himself."

"Ay! very curious."

"Yes, sir, very curious. The little money he lives upon is sent him, at stated times, by some person or persons unknown, and the receipt is managed by an advertisement in the newspapers."

"Oh, I perceive, sir (imagining I saw the whole mystery); some unfortunate —"

"Can't tell, sir, can't tell," interrupted the baker snappishly.

"Oh, beg pardon, sir; my curiosity is from no improper motive."

"I dare say not, sir, I dare say not. Whatever he be, or however supported, he is a very inoffensive man. Always pays for what he gets, and never has an unkind word. And I can assure you, sir, though you see him in these shabby habiliments, you would find, if you conversed with him, that he is a *very intelligent fellow*."

It was vain to tell my farinaceous friend that he had only arrived at that generic description of the object of my inquiry, which I had myself set out from. So I took my leave, content to remain in mystery respecting a man who seemed to be a mystery to himself.

RAPACIOUS BIRDS OF BRITAIN.

THE birds of prey of this country are all members of the Falcon and Owl families. The number of species belonging to the British Falcon family amount to eighteen, of which eleven are varieties of the eagle, and seven of the hawk. The Owl family is less numerous, being composed of nine varieties. Such at least is the arrangement followed by Mr Macgillivray in his work on this subject, from which we propose to cull some entertaining extracts.

The most interesting, unquestionably, of all birds of prey, is the eagle, both because he stands pre-eminent in size and power, and because he, like every other creature that has the daring and the ability to trench on the property or rights of man, is rapidly disappearing before the spread of civilisation which marks the supreme dominion of the lord of earth. The king of the air has found no safety in his eyrie against an opponent so subtle as man, whose sacred person the haughty bird has even dared, it is said, sometimes to attack. The writer to whom we have alluded gives the following description of the great white-tailed sea-eagle, and of the method adopted for its capture or destruction. The bird, we may premise, measures frequently from seven to nine feet between the tips of the wings, with the body of a proportionable bulk. If magnitude, strength, and rapacity, constitute nobility, this eagle is a noble bird; though it is doubtful whether it can lay claim to the possession of high courage:—"When standing, its postures are by no means graceful; but the keenness of its bright and fierce eye enlivens its appearance, and under excitement it throws itself into beautiful and picturesque attitudes, drawing back its head, and erecting the narrow and pointed feathers of the neck. When it is fairly on wing, its motions are beautiful in the highest degree. Its wings are expanded to their full length, forming an obtuse angle with the back; and as it sweeps along in wide curves, it seems to glide through the air without the least effort, and with very little motion of the wings or tail. In this manner it searches the hill-sides, the moors, and the shores; but in proceeding to a distance, without regarding the intermediate space, it flies in a straight line, always at a great height, and with regular flaps, somewhat in the manner of the raven."

Its food is chiefly carrion, that is to say, the bodies of animals that have perished from natural or accidental causes. When such nutriment is not to be found, it carries off young birds, fish, poultry, and young lambs, and, when hard pressed by hunger, has been known to attack sheep, and even deer. "From whichever of these sources it may procure food, its young are always well provided for, and instances have occurred in the Hebrides of people obtaining an additional supply of food, in times of scarcity, by climbing or rather descending to its nest, which is generally nearer the summit than the base of the cliffs. I have never heard of its attacking a person when robbing its nest; but I have been credibly informed of two serious assaults made by it on individuals whom it found in a perilous situation. A man, in the island of Lewis, having crept to the edge of a shelf overhanging the nest of an eagle, was waiting the arrival of the birds, for the purpose of shooting them, when one of them, sweeping silently along the top of the cliff, struck him unawares with its wing, although without producing any other effect than giving its enemy a sound fright. Among some rugged crags at the lower end of Loch Suainebladh, in the same island, a pair of these birds annually rear their young. A woman, who had been in the moors looking after cattle, was descending the rocks by a difficult path, when the two eagles attacked her with great fury. She defended

herself, however, in the best manner she could, and escaped with some severe scratches and the loss of her cap.

In the Hebrides, the raven is perpetually harassing the eagle, which its superior agility enables it to do with safety, although I have never seen it venture to come into actual contact with its powerful adversary. The hooded crow, which is also very common there, never, I believe, makes even a show of opposition to the eagle; and I have not seen any other bird molesting it, unless it might be its brother the golden eagle. I have seen eagles fighting in the air; their motions were then beautiful, and displayed considerable agility. When the higher one approached the other, the latter threw itself on its back, and received the foe with extended talons. Their shrill screams filled the air to a great distance.

The usual mode of destroying eagles in the Hebrides is the following:—In a remote part, generally on an eminence, the declivity of a mountain, or the margin of a precipice in which eagles breed, a pit, about six feet in length and three in breadth, is dug to the depth of two or three feet. The turf removed from it is arranged as a wall, so as to deepen the pit a foot or two more. Some sticks are then laid across it, together with heath, and the whole is covered over with fresh turf taken from some distance. An opening large enough to admit a person is left at one end, and at the other is formed an aperture about six inches in diameter. The door is closed by a bundle of heath; and in this state the pit or hut is left until all traces of labour are effaced from it by the weather, and the keen eye of the eagle, as he sails over it, can distinguish nothing but a tuft of heath similar to those around. A carcass is then procured, a sheep that has been found dead on the hills, or an old and useless horse that has been taken out and killed for the purpose. It is placed at the distance of fifteen or twenty yards from the hut, so as to be visible from within through the small aperture. The hunter enters, spreads a layer of heath on the floor, closes the entrance behind him by pulling into it the bundle, lays him down on his side, places the muzzle of his gun in the aperture, and prepares for a tedious watch. Hours often pass, and yet no bird makes its appearance. Heavy rains descend, penetrate the roof, and leave him in a very uncomfortable state; or he is chilled by the piercing winds of winter. He is every now and then surveying the few yards of ground before him with an impatient eye. At length he hears a well-known voice, and presently perceives on the nearest eminence a large raven, which looks anxiously around, and croaks, then hops forward a step or two, rises on wing, and alights on the carcass. Here it again looks round for a few moments, and commences its feast, first devouring the eye, then the tongue, if it can get hold of it, and, lastly, picking under the tail. Another raven appears, and frequently many in succession; but as the hunter knows not how near the eagle may be, he refrains from shooting, or even disturbing them. Sometimes a gull of the large black-backed species, or a burgo-master, or even a herring gull, appears with its unsullied white plumage, and walks anxiously about, but does not dare to attempt a participation of the feast so long as the ravens remain unsatisfied. At length hurried noises are heard from the carrion birds, which look around in an anxious manner; the rushing as of a current of air comes on the ear of the lie-in-wait, who brings his gun to his shoulder; and, as the birds disperse, he sees the eagle quietly seating itself on the carcass, gathering up its large wings, and preparing to commence the banquet. Now is the time—now, or never. Forth rushes the little shower of buck-shot, the terrified gulls and ravens fly off, screaming and croaking, and the author of their panic, kicking out the bundle of heath from the door of the hut, drags himself into open day, and runs up to the carcass, on which is stretched the once formidable skimmer of the clouds, now vainly struggling in the agonies of death. He admires the expanded wings and large yellow beak of his prey, returns for his trusty gun, throws the dead eagle on his back, and leaves the carrion to the ravens, until another dawn sees him enter the hut of the moors. I have known a shepherd kill five eagles in this manner on one farm in the course of a winter; but frequently the carcass is devoured by the ravens and gulls without the occurrence of a single eagle. A small premium is usually given by the factors or land-stewards for every eagle killed; and I should imagine there cannot be fewer than twenty annually destroyed in the Outer Hebrides.

But a more animating scene now presents itself. The farmer, breathing vengeance for the massacres perpetrated upon the young lambs in spring, has assembled his shepherds and cottars. They proceed, one carrying a coil of rope, another a bundle of dry heath, and a third a burning peat, toward the further brow of the mountain, where the fissured and shelved precipice hangs over the foamy margin of the Atlantic. Far in the west, in misty and melancholy grandeur, rise the lone isles of St Kilda. The great ocean is spread around, its impetuous currents sweeping along the rugged shores. Strings of cormorants, and lesser sea-birds, are seen winding round the promontories; while here and there, over the curling waves, is seen hovering a solitary gull. They have reached the brink of the cliffs, over which the more timid scarce dare venture to cast a glance, for almost directly under their feet is the unfathomed sea, heaving its heavy billows

some hundred feet below the place to which they cling. The eagles are abroad, sailing at a cautious distance in circles, uttering wild and harsh screams, and, as they sweep past, displaying their powerful talons. One of the men fastens the rope to his body, passing it under his arms and securing it upon his breast by a firm knot. The rest dig holes with their heels in the turf, and, sitting down in a row, take firm hold of the cord. The adventurer looks over the edge of the cliff, marks the projecting shelf which overhangs the eagle's nest, and is gradually lowered towards it, bearing in one hand the bundle of heath, with a cord attached to it, and the peat burning in the middle, and with the other pushing himself from the angular projection of the rock. At length he arrives on the shelf, and calls to those above to slacken the rope, but keep fast hold of it. Then, creeping forwards, and eagerly clinging to the unstable tufts of rock-plants, he looks downwards, and ascertains the precise position of the nest, in which are two eaglets covered with down, skeletons of fishes, birds, and lambs, lying heaped around them. At sight of the human face, which to their imagination is any thing but divine, the young eagles shrink back in terror, covering beneath the projecting angle that partly roofs the nest. Their enemy now retreats, disposes the bundle of heath in a loose manner, blows the peat into a flame, and partially encloses it. Once more he approaches the brink, casting an anxious eye towards the old eagles, which are wheeling in short circles, and uttering confused and piercing cries; then, blowing the flame, he kindles the bundle of combustibles, and rapidly lowers it right into the nest. The young birds scream and hiss, throwing themselves into attitudes of defence. The heath smokes and crackles, and at length blazes into full flame; then the sticks, sea-weeds, wool, and feathers, of the nest, catch fire, and the ascending column of smoke indicates to the ropemen above that the deed is doing. Flames and smoke conceal the young birds from the avenger's gaze, but he stirs not until they have abated, and he sees the huge eyrie with its contents reduced to ashes. He then calls to his friends, who tighten the rope, and preparing himself for the ascent, is hauled up, encountering no small danger from the fragments which are loosened by the cord, and the difficulty of keeping his face and breast from the ragged points that project from the cliff. Birds have feelings as well as men, and those of the eagle are doubtless acute, for the old birds wheel and scream along the face of the rock for many days in succession, and as by this time the summer is far advanced, they form no new nest.

In almost every district in the Highlands, stories are told of eagles that have carried away infants temporarily left by their mothers in the harvest-field or elsewhere, and it is probable that such an occurrence may have taken place, although the evidence is usually imperfect. Sir Robert Sibbald states, that in Orkney 'an eagle seized a child, a year old, which its mother had left, wrapped up in some clothes, at a place called Houton-Head, while she went for a few moments to gather sticks for firewood, and carried it a distance of four miles to Housa; which circumstance being known from the cries of the mother, four men went there in a boat, and, knowing where the nest was, found the child unhurt and untouched.' Wilson, the ornithologist of America, gives an account of a feat of this kind which a white-headed eagle had attempted. 'A woman who happened to be weeding in the garden, had set her child down near to amuse itself while she was at work, when a sudden and extraordinary rushing sound, and a scream from her child, alarmed her, and starting up, she beheld the infant thrown down, and dragged some few feet, and a large bald eagle bearing off a fragment of its frock, which being the only part seized, and giving way, providentially saved the life of the infant.' This happened near Great Egg-harbour, in New Jersey.

That such an occurrence is neither impossible nor improbable, may be conceived from the following anecdote, related by a gentleman of undoubted credibility:—"The clergyman of Hoy was walking near his house, when he heard the squeak of a pig, which excited his attention, as he kept none of these animals. On looking about him, he perceived an eagle sailing away to Hoy Head with a young grunter in his talons; on which he tossed up his hat, but the bird took no notice of it. On inquiring among his neighbours, he found that the pig had been taken from one of them, and was just four weeks old."

The Golden Eagle, a bird very little inferior in magnitude to the sea-eagle, has frequently performed feats of a similar kind. An instance of this occurred under Mr Macgillivray's observation:—"A lamb belonging to myself," says he, "which was feeding with its mother near the house, was seized by an eagle, and slowly carried up along the side of the hill. An outcry having been raised by a person who had witnessed the seizure, I and some other boys ran after the eagle, shouting as loud as we could. On reaching the brow of the hill, the bird rested with its prey, but being frightened by the noise, and seeing us approach, it left the lamb, which we found but slightly injured, the eagle's talons having been stuck into its back."

Eagles are said to be exceedingly partial to the flesh of dogs, and occasionally they pounce upon poor grimaldins:—"When John Mackay was in Kildonan, an eagle bore away a dog belonging to William Armstrong, which was three years old, and about the size of a hare. Eagles carry off hares very frequently,

and sit on the top of some lofty eminence to devour them. A Kildonan eagle pounced upon a cat, and bore it away to her nest. The injuries inflicted by the clutch of the eagle, and the unusual mode of travelling, so confounded poor puss, that she exhibited no signs of life, and was accordingly left for dead by the eagle with her young ones. But soon after the eagle had left the nest, the cat revived, and having killed the eaglets, made a hearty meal of one of them. She then made a hurried retreat, and effected her escape without further injury. This anecdote is well authenticated.

Mr Sutherland related another anecdote to me, which he affirms is perfectly true. Two sons of a man of the name of Murray, in Achnaluchrich, having robbed an eagle's nest, were retreating with the young, when one of the parent birds, having returned, made a most determined attack upon them. They said they had never been in such peril; for the eagle dipped her wing in a burn that run by, and then in sand, and sweeping repeatedly by them, struck at them with her wing. Although each had a stick, it was with great difficulty that they at length effected their escape, when almost ready to sink under fatigue."

The osprey and buzzard are all large birds of the eagle family, though inferior in size and interest to those already mentioned. Though still lower in scale as refers to magnitude and strength, the falcon tribe possess on special grounds an interest stronger than any that appertains to other birds of prey. Who can think of the Merlin (Falco Eulion), for example, without remembering the times when the bird

"Sat upon a lady's wrist,
Held by a lash of silken twist."

Of the merlin's habits Mr Macgillivray gives an animated description—"On the side of the Lammer-Law, the highest hill of the range that extends from the county of Peebles towards St Abb's Head, near the brink of a scar, which has been worn deep in the gravelly soil by the undermining action of a rill, is a nest of the merlin, if nest that can be called, which is merely a little flat space strewn with a few sticks and withered sedges. You hear the hungry plaint of the young, as the morning dawn advances them from their slumbers. See! the mother advances a few steps, stretches her wings, shakes herself, inspects her plumage, trims a bent feather in her tail, picks a little clod of peat from her toe, eyes the heavens slantingly, and, throwing herself forward, spreads out her beautiful pinions, and launching into the air, ascends a few yards by strong flappings. How lightly she wheels in her circling flight, as she seems now to glance toward her young a look of parental affection, and again surveys the distant plains! Now, her few short wheelings ended, off she shoots, flying in a direct line towards the Gifford woods, where, no doubt, she expects to find a missel thrush by the edge of the orchard, a young partridge beneath the hedge, a lark carolling over the field, or, at all events, some object worthy of her pursuit. As you watch her motions, the male, having shaken off his drowsiness, trimmed his plumes, and scratched his cheek, springs into the air, and almost touching the tops of the broom and heather, speeds directly over the shoulder of the hill, to search the upland moors.

But look this way: a merlin has already arrived, bearing in its claws an unfortunate snipe, which he clutched as it was searching for a few worms, to satisfy the hunger of its patient and uncomplaining young, that lay squat among the moss in the low grounds beside the Milton Burn. What a clamour the ravenous creatures make, as their mother throws down the prey, which one of them presently seizes, and appropriates to himself. Now she is off. But what is that on the hill top? A hawk, 'I guess,' with a burden as large as itself. It comes, and that not slowly. It has arrived. A golden plover, with its beautiful black breast, margined with white, stood on the top of a mossy mound, when suddenly there came upon him the ruthless plunderer. Loud screamed the bird of the moors, as he sprang on wing, and sped his rapid flight. Like a pirate chasing a merchantman among the shoals of Cuba, did the merlin thread the mazes of the plover's path, until at length, coming down upon him at an unlucky turn, he drove him to the ground.

Again, one of the falcons has arrived, with a lark in his claws. Come, let us go, for we have much to do before we reach Gifford, where we are to breakfast. Nay, not so fast; 'wait a wee!' we are on the Lammer-Law, beside a hawk's nest, and I wish to shoot that smart little fellow that you see hastening away to Danskin Loch. In five minutes he will be there, for eight miles to a merlin are nothing. There, I think, I see him as he goes dashing over the woods. The still pool, overgrown in part with rushes and reeds, and shadowed by thick firs, brightens under the morning beams that shoot slantingly over the hollow in which it lies. The water-hen moves merrily along, jerking up its white-patched tail, as it leads its sooty brood to the sedgy thicket; the mallards are muddling and spluttering by the edge of the swamp; and a single heron stands on a little rocky isle, on a single leg, with indrawn neck and yellow bill directed forwards. Is there nothing else? Yes, the merlin skims over the pool; a sandpiper flies off and is pursued; the gallinules scramble among the reeds, the ducks splash in the water, and the heron lets down his leg, and places himself in an attitude of observation. But the chase is over; the merlin flies off with his prey. Here he comes: we can now see him without glasses. You

may imagine, good reader, that you hear a shot, that the merlin comes to the ground, and that thereupon the company disperse."

Notwithstanding the voracity and power of rapacious birds in general, it has been remarked that they are frequently the objects of persecution to flocks of the smaller birds, who join forces to drive the marauders from their haunts:—"In July 1829, while walking along George Street, I observed a sparrow-hawk flying over the houses, with a train of about twenty swallows, which kept up an incessant chatter. This fact, the like of which every naturalist must have often observed, I introduce here in order to state all that I know on the subject. Birds of prey of all kinds are objects of terror to the animals on which they feed, at least to the mammalia and birds. Thus, the larks or partridges of a field over which a hawk is hovering, crouch motionless on the ground, and, under the influence of this panic, will even occasionally suffer themselves to be taken by man. On the other hand, a bird of prey is often seen to be annoyed by other smaller and weaker birds, not of a rapacious nature, which fly after it in scattered bands, some keeping beneath, some above it, but always at a considerable distance. It is to be observed, however, that all small birds do not fly after hawks. Thus, I have never seen thrushes, blackbirds, wagtails, or wrens, pursuing a kestrel or sparrow-hawk; nor do partridges fly after a goshawk, nor grouse after a peregrine falcon. The feaser (Lestrin) is sure to be attacked by terns when he appears among them; but I believe the common gull, the kittiwake, or the black-headed gull, seldom if ever molest him. Eagles are frequently assailed by ravens and skuas, but never by hooded crows, nor indeed by any other bird whatever, excepting the goshawk, the peregrine, and some other hawks, when they happen to pass near their nests. Again, small birds often attack the cuckoo, which, although he may look like a hawk, is quite innocent; and should they meet with an owl in broad day, they neither scruple nor fear to approach him. These are facts which most people have observed; but the explanation of them seems not very easy. The prevalent idea is this:—small birds being the natural prey of hawks, the former bear, and with good reason, a grudge against the latter; when a hawk is observed wending his solitary way over the fields, they call to each other, and collecting in a band, assume a certain degree of courage, which, combining with their hatred towards the marauder, impels them to pursue and to harass him. Attack him they dare not, for they are conscious of their inability to injure him; they therefore hover about him, venting their spite in loud execrations; and as some fly over and others under him, some to the right, and others to the left, the hawk is distracted so as to be unable to single out an individual. The small birds know this, and continue their impertinent intrusion until tired of the sport."

The other birds of prey belonging to the falcon and owl families of Britain have little interest attached to their character as rapacious creatures, though in a general point of view they form a delightful leaf in the book of Natural History. In proof of this, we may refer to the common barn-owl, whom we long ago endeavoured to make the readers of the Journal know, love, and admire.

THE UNINHABITED HOUSE.

SEVERAL years ago, a Scottish officer chanced to be stationed with his regiment in Ireland, in a town of the county of Galway. Captain Allanton (for such was his name) was a handsome and accomplished man, in the prime of life, and possessed of a considerable private fortune. He had been early married, but had enjoyed his wife's society only a few years, when she died, leaving an only child, now a lad of sixteen. Very soon after his arrival at the station we have alluded to, Captain Allanton had formed an acquaintance with all the respectable families of the neighbourhood, and his engaging manners and social disposition rendered him a general favourite, both with the gentlemen and ladies. Among the latter, the most distinguished for beauty and accomplishments was Miss O'Halloran, and her attractions were such as to touch a second time the captain's heart. He made an offer of his hand, was accepted, and in a short time led this fair daughter of Erin to the altar.

One acquirement which Captain Allanton's lady possessed in a peculiar degree, was that of drawing, and to this the husband also was strongly attached. Many beautiful landscapes lay in Mrs Allanton's portfolio, and it was the captain's pride to exhibit these proofs of his wife's skill to his visitors. On one of these occasions, there was accidentally present a gentleman of fortune in the district, who, after bestowing his meed of approbation on Mrs Allanton's drawings, informed her that he was proprietor of a large old house in the suburbs, the windows of which commanded landscape-views of the greatest variety and beauty. The house had been for many years uninhabited, but the keys, the gentleman said, were at the lady's service, if she would honour him by visiting the spot, and putting his taste in perspective to the test. Mrs Allanton readily accepted the proposal, and the keys were sent to her on the ensuing morning.

The captain's military duties demanded his attention through the whole of that forenoon, and his lady,

unwilling to lose the advantage of a fine and sunny day, collected her drawing materials, and called upon Charles, her stepson, to attend her to the old house. Anxious always to oblige her who was in truth a second mother to him, Charles willingly consented, and the pair set out on their walk. They found the house which they sought in a lonely situation, and to appearance long deserted. It was large, and consisted of several floors. The lock of the outer door had been so long unused, that it resisted for some time every attempt made by Charles to open it; and when it at last gave way, the massive door creaked heavily upon its hinges, revealing within a long gloomy passage, from which, according to an old fashion, the several apartments branched off. The same arrangement existed in the upper stories, and the almost entire absence of furniture gave the whole a sad and dismal aspect.

Mrs Allanton having selected one of the apartments, the windows of which commanded a very fine view, sat down to sketch it, while Charles, having some commissions to execute in the town, took leave of his stepmother for a time. The day was lovely; the sun was beaming in all his glory from a cloudless sky, the green leaves were quivering with a gentle breeze, the face of nature wore a cheerful smile, and, to use the fine conception of a modern poet, the very mountains seemed to "stand up and worship" the Author of so fair a creation. For several hours our heroine occupied her lonely seat in the uninhabited house, and had partly delineated with her pencil the enchanting scene that was glowing in the rich luxuriance of summer before her eyes, when on a sudden she heard a slight noise, as if a knock were given somewhere within the apartment. She paused, and looked around her—the knock was repeated, and she distinctly saw the door of a press opposite to her open a little. Though Mrs Allanton was a woman of firm nerves, she could not help feeling a slight agitation at such an occurrence in an uninhabited place. She had little time, however, for conjecture, ere a third knock was given, louder than the others, and a sound instantly followed, as if some one had struck the strings of a guitar. The lady now thought that some person was secreted in the press, in order to sport a little with her fears; but how any one had got admission, she could not conceive. She rose, and advancing to the door of the press, she opened it wide, when a poor but presented itself to her eyes, fluttering about in a state of half-stupor, with an old guitar lying on the shelf beside it. The cause of the noise was thus simply explained, and, with a reassured mind, Mrs Allanton returned to her seat. Shortly after, as her dinner hour drew nigh, she put up her sketch and drawing materials, and left the old house, locking the outer door and taking the key with her.

The incident of the bat and the guitar, when related by Mrs Allanton to her husband and friends, excited no little merriment, and in this, though she herself was the butt, the lady good-naturedly joined. Her incomplete drawing was greatly admired, and promised, when finished, to be the most perfect gem in her collection. But, from many causes of one kind and another, several weeks passed over without Mrs Allanton renewing her visit to the uninhabited house. At last, when her husband and Charles jested her rather severely one evening on the subject of the bat-serenade, as they termed her adventure, she resolved to return to the lonely mansion, and resume her drawing on the following day, telling her tormentors at the same time smilingly, that she would prove herself a woman of courage.

Though the morning was rather unfavourable, our fair artist carried her intentions into effect. At an early hour she proceeded, with her working materials, to the uninhabited house, her stepson and a friend, Dr Fitzjames, having promised to call for her, and escort her home, a short time before the dinner hour. After entering the house, Mrs Allanton, placing the outer door on the latch, ascended to her favourite room on the second floor. She did not resume her painting until she had looked, more from curiosity than any other motive, into the press. The guitar was lying there still, but no bat was to be seen. Shutting the door of the press, she then took her seat at the window, and prepared to complete her sketch. The day, however, was unfavourable, and the land-cape appeared now much less beautiful than before. A gloomy stillness hung over the scene; the birds cowered in their leafy recesses, and no refreshing breeze stirred the trees. This change in the prospect before her, together with the consciousness that she sat alone in an old deserted habitation, considerably affected Mrs Allanton's spirits, and she once thought of returning home for that day. Reflecting, however, that this would not only appear pusillanimous, but would really be so, she turned her attention resolutely to the completion of her piece. She determined still to represent the landscape in sunshine, as she had seen it on the former day, and speedily forgot for a time her situation, in the pleasing pursuit of the art she loved so well.

Several hours had passed away in unbroken tranquillity, when our heroine, on turning her head from the window in order to rest for a moment from her labours, saw, as she imagined, a figure gliding slowly past the door of her apartment, which had been left half open. She started—but instantly recollected, that if any person had come into the house, the loud creaking of the heavy outer door must have made it known to her. Her good sense, therefore,

suggested to her, that the depression of her spirits, arising from the gloominess of the day and the loneliness of her situation, had over-excited her imagination, and she composedly took up her pencil again. Scarcely, however, had another minute elapsed, when the crash of a door shutting violently above stairs, renewed her alarm to the highest degree. Still she attempted to restore her mental composure by ascribing the noise to the accidental closing of a door by the wind. A moment's glance at the trees outside overturned this conjecture, since not a breath of air was stirring among them.

Our heroine began now to entertain a serious suspicion that the figure she had seen was no imaginary one, and that some person had got into the house, though the means of entrance were not apparent. Resolved to be satisfied without delay, she went through all the apartments in the floor on which she then was. No trace of living thing was visible. She then proceeded to examine the apartments above; and what was her amazement at beholding, in one of the garret rooms, an old woman, wretchedly clothed, very busily employed in stirring a pot that hung over a blazing fire! The place was gloomy, being lighted only by a small window in the roof, but the fire threw a ghastly glare on the countenance of the old woman, and exhibited, to Mrs Allanton's eyes, features embued with an expression so fiendish, that the looker-on felt her blood run cold. She demanded, however, of the woman, in as firm a tone as possible, what she was doing there, and how she had got into the house. The crone muttered an answer, which was unintelligible to our heroine. Meanwhile, her eyes becoming better accustomed to the dim light of the room, Mrs Allanton cast her eyes around, and discovered a considerable number of sacks tied up, which, from their shape, appeared to contain dead bodies! This horrible idea was confirmed by her observation of white skin through a small hole in one of the sacks! Unable to utter a word at this spectacle, Mrs Allanton rushed down stairs, and locked herself, with all the hurry of mortal fear, into the room where she had been painting. Her agitation of mind was such, that she dared not stir from the spot where she was, or attempt to make her way to the door. "They may be in waiting for me in some corner of the passage," thought the poor lady. "I am in the haunt of murderers, or resurrection-men, or both!—A helpless woman!"

Mrs Allanton now waited in an agony of impatience for the coming of her stepson and Dr Fitzjames. The minutes flew by with the tardiness of hours, when at last she heard the welcome sound of footsteps on the stairs. She had not heard the street door open, but this she attributed to the agitation of her mind, and seizing her drawing, she prepared to unlock her door. The footsteps outside had approached, and ere the key could be turned, a sudden and heavy thump was given to the door from the passage. Mrs Allanton was not alarmed at this, conceiving it to be a frolic of Charles, and she therefore pulled the door open. Her alarm may be conceived, when, instead of her friends, she beheld two tall men, clad in long coarse blue frock-coats, with besmudged and ferocious-looking countenances, and long knives stuck in belts round their waists. The horror which seized the lady's mind, reached its acme, when she perceived that the burden laid down in the passage was a sack containing a dead body, the naked skin of which she plainly saw. Without listening to the words which one of the men addressed to her in a gruff tone, Mrs Allanton closed the door of her room with the rapidity of thought, turned the key, and sank down on her chair nearly in a fainting state. The men, a short time after, raised their fearful burden, as our heroine thought, from the ground, and conveyed it up stairs to the secret depository of so many similar loads. The door closed behind them, and all was quiet for a time.

Our heroine, after trying in vain to put up the windows in order to call aloud for help, sat down again to count, in almost breathless anxiety, the weary moments till the hour for the arrival of her friends. It came at last—the outer door creaked on its hinges—a footstep was heard on the stair—and the voice of Dr Fitzjames answered to the lady's question "Who is there?" Almost immediately on being admitted by Mrs Allanton into the room, the doctor observed her paleness and agitation, and earnestly inquired the reason. She rapidly informed him of the sights she had witnessed, and entreated him to conduct her from the house. The doctor could not suppress a smile at the tale, and hinted something concerning imagination and excitement. Rather annoyed at being suspected of so much weakness, Mrs Allanton exclaimed, "I solemnly assure you, sir, that what I have seen is no dream, but a fearful reality." "I admit, then," answered the doctor, "that this is passing strange, nor can I at all account for it. I shall go to the upper rooms, however, and satisfy myself as to what is going on there; I shall have the truth unravelled in an instant." "For heaven's sake, sir," cried the lady, "do not think of that! The loss of your own life and mine may be the consequence of such rashness. No, no! let us make our escape instantly, if we can, from this abode of blood and horror!" The doctor, who believed that the whole was founded on some extraordinary mistake, persisted in his resolution to go up stairs, requesting Mrs Allanton to remain composedly for a few moments in the room, where she was safe. Our heroine, who had the evidence of her senses for the truth of her relation, entreated him almost in a state of frenzy to save

his own life and hers by instant flight. Dr Fitzjames, however, broke from her grasp, and begging her to be calm for an instant, rushed up the stairs, determined to know the truth.

The poor lady remained behind him in a state of anxiety that cannot be described. She listened to every step he took, expecting, on the opening of the garret-room door, to hear the noise of a scuffle, followed by the last groans of her expiring friend. Not a sound met her ear, however, of any kind; and she then concluded that the wretches above must have done their work of death by sudden suffocation.

Happily, none of these dismal surmises proved true. Within a few minutes, which appeared hours to the lady, the doctor came quietly down stairs, endeavouring to stifle a laugh. This he was not successful in, and, to the astonishment of our yet terrified heroine, on coming into the room where she was, he burst out into a long and hearty peal. "It is cruel in me not to explain matters at once," said he at last; "I prophesied that there had been some strange mistake, and so it has fallen out. The people who have given you so much uneasiness are respectable dealers in *bacon*! The bodies in the sacks are fat hogs, and what the supposed murderers were carrying up stairs was only another to add to their stock. The flesh of these, when divested of the bristles, and when the animal is newly killed, is very white, like the human skin; and hence your mistake. The knives the men had used in killing the last, were stuck, as usual, in their belts; and the old woman is wife to one of the men."

Mrs Allanton was a woman of good sense, and, on having the cause of her fears so simply and easily unravelled, she joined heartily in the doctor's laughter. The only circumstance which she could not understand, was the method by which the men entered the place, and how the uninhabited house came to be inhabited. A low back door explained the first point, and the doctor learned that the gentleman who possessed the house entrusted the letting of it to a factor, and that this person had taken the bacon-makers as tenants of the garrets, during the two months that had elapsed between Mrs Allanton's first and second visit. After giving the lady the key, the proprietor had been called hastily to a distant part of the country.

And thus ended the fearful mystery of the uninhabited house, which Captain Allanton's wife used to relate afterwards, to the great entertainment of her friends. Unsusured by the honest bacon-manufacturers, she frequently ventured back to the scene of her trials, and many of the most beautiful drawings in her portfolio were views from the Uninhabited House.

THE LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER RAILWAY.

FOR more than half a century, the industrious towns of the west of England have been connected with each other by canals; by means of which, goods of every kind can be transported with considerable facility, and at comparatively moderate expense. Canals, however, admit only of draught horses as the locomotive power; and even if steam navigation were practicable upon them, it would not be by a half or a third so expeditious as the steam locomotive power can be made on railways. It was therefore determined some years ago, by a number of enterprising individuals, that the canal connection of Liverpool and Manchester was insufficient, and that a railway was highly desirable to furnish improved means of intercourse between those two towns, which have perhaps more communication with each other than any other two seats of population in the kingdom. A prospectus of such an undertaking was published in October 1824, and application was soon after made to Parliament for the necessary legislative sanction. After considerable difficulties, and some changes of design, a bill was obtained in May 1826; a capital of £400,000 (afterwards increased to £510,000) was subscribed for in hundred pound shares; and in June the work was commenced.

The town of Manchester is situated about thirty-one miles from the port of Liverpool, in the direction of the interior of the country. Though the intermediate space presented no great variety of levels, the formation of the railway involved operations of no inconsiderable magnitude. From the docks of Liverpool, it was necessary to carry a way for goods underneath the town, by a tunnel, till it reached the clear country beyond. Even on ascending into the open air, it was necessary to cut a way, in some places seventy feet deep, for two miles, through a rocky eminence called Olive Mount. Two valleys, one of which was traversed by a road and the other by a canal, were then to be crossed by embankments and viaducts; and still the greatest difficulty of all remained in the Chat Moss, a bog twelve miles in extent, and of the softest nature, across which it was necessary to form a solid way. Notwithstanding all obstacles, the undertaking was commenced with the greatest spirit, and under such hopes, that the shares rose considerably in price.

In the excavation of the tunnel, which proceeded through solid rock, the work was of so novel and so dangerous a kind, that the workmen could with difficulty be induced to pursue their employment. The formation of the way across the Chat Moss was not less difficult. The bog was in the first place drained as far as possible: it has ultimately been so much so, that it is now a smiling agricultural region. Immense quantities of earth were then thrown in, much of which disappeared in the depths of the morass, before any thing like a palpable footing could be obtained: 277,000 cubic yards were employed to form the mound by which the railway crosses this once dreary tract. Besides the cutting of the Olive Mount, there was the building of the viaducts, and the raising of embankments—the erection of sixty-three bridges, and the construction of a shorter tunnel to convey passengers underneath an elevated piece of ground in the outskirts of Liverpool—and, finally, the laying down of the rails, the building of stations and warehouses, and the preparation of the requisite engines and waggons. The magnitude of all these works will be best estimated from a view of the expenses. For cuttings and embankments, there was paid £199,763; for the Chat Moss, £27,719; for the tunnel, £44,788; for land, £95,305; for fencing, £10,202; for bridges, £199,065; for the formation of the road, £20,568; for the laying of blocks and sleepers to receive the rails, £20,520; for rails (iron being then £12, 10s. per ton), £69,912; besides expenses for surveying, for law and parliamentary business, and other incidental matters; making a total outlay, in May 1830, when the work was nearly completed, of £739,183, or nearly twenty-four thousand pounds per mile.

The company having determined on employing locomotive, in preference to stationary engines, for the draught of passengers and goods, every preparation was made for the opening of the railway on the 15th of September, when the Duke of Wellington, prime minister, Mr Peel, home-secretary, Mr Huskisson, and a number of other distinguished persons, agreed to pass in the first train, in company with the directors. A gay cortege, consisting of thirty-three carriages, some of them containing elegantly dressed ladies, and others bands of music, started from Liverpool, amidst the acclamations of a countless throng, and with all the splendours of a pageant of old. But soon the gaiety of the company was damped. While the engines were stopping to take in water at Parkside, Mr Huskisson, with many other persons, strolled for a few minutes along the line. At the moment when he was returning to his seat, another train of carriages came up. All ran to take their places; but Mr Huskisson, losing for a moment his presence of mind, failed to move with sufficient promptitude out of the way. He was in an instant overthrown, and crushed beneath the wheels of the advancing carriages. His thigh was found to be fractured in the upper part in a dreadful manner; and his own first expression, "I have met my death," proved too true, for he died that evening in the neighbouring parsonage of Eccles. The train passed on with the rest of the passengers to Manchester, without further accident; but the contemplated festivities were forgotten amidst the gloom occasioned by this tragical occurrence.

In an earlier age, so lamentable a sacrifice of human life to the unbending laws of matter, would have been held as an evil omen, and superstition might have brought about the result which it expected. Being, in our more enlightened age, accepted as a simple accident, and one for which the various powers of machinery concerned in the railway were not in the least blameable, it had no such effect. From that day the railway became a medium for the conveyance of passengers, of whom eight hundred were daily carried within the first fortnight, and twelve hundred soon after, though the whole number of passengers by the mails and stage-coaches had never been above seven hundred. In December, the company began to carry merchandise, coal, timber, cattle, sheep, and pigs.

The locomotive power employed in drawing passengers and goods along the railway, may be simply described as that of the steam-engine, adapted to a carriage, upon which it operates by the usual means. The appearance of these engine-carriages is light and elegant, their weight not exceeding six tons. The carriages containing goods and passengers are connected in a train behind, ranging in number from five to twenty: on a perfect level the engine-carriage will with ease draw as much as a hundred horses could do upon a common road. The carriages for passengers are fashioned as if three common coach-bodies were placed in a range upon one frame; each coach-body containing six seats, divided by arms, and numbered; so that eighteen is the total number of persons that can be accommodated in a single carriage. For each carriage there is a guide on the outside. The engine-carriages can go at the rate of thirty miles an hour, and a much higher rate of progression is supposed to be within the limits of mechanical possibility; but, practically, from twenty to twenty-six miles an

hour is found to be a safe and convenient rate, so that the journey between Liverpool and Manchester is usually accomplished, omitting stoppages, in an hour and a half. From the tremendous powers of machinery when working on a great scale, it is naturally supposed that railway travelling is more dangerous than that by ordinary coaches and ordinary roads. A little reflection shows that this is a mistake. In the hold which the carriages take of the railway, and the directness and regularity of the motion, the former mode of travelling has obviously a decided advantage over the coach of the common road, which has no hold of the ground beyond what gravity gives it, and is liable to be deranged in its movements by many causes which do not affect the other kind of carriages. But experience has fully proved what reflection would show in this case to be probable, for it has been ascertained that the accidents that have hitherto taken place on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, many of which were attributable solely to breaches of regulations by the passengers themselves, are only as one to a hundred in comparison with the similar damages to life and limb that take place in the transportation of a like number of persons by ordinary coaches. In other words, the risk by the railway is only a hundredth part of the risk by a common coach. In a Report for the first three months and a half, issued by the directors of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, it appeared that a hundred and thirty thousand persons had gone the whole extent of the line, besides many taken up for shorter distances, and that only two accidents had taken place. Such, indeed, is the mechanical accuracy of every thing connected with this great establishment, that, if an individual takes his place in time, and does not stir till he is at the conclusion of his journey, it is difficult to see by what means he can suffer any injury.

The prosperity of this great work was from the first very decided. The number of passengers in the year 1831 was 445,047; in 1832, 356,945; in 1833, 386,492; and in the first half of 1834, 200,676; since which period no statement of the number has been published. The tonnage of merchandise, exclusive of coal, timber, and live stock, transported the same years, was, 105,834—101,562—194,704—and for the half year of 1834, 104,356. The receipts for passengers in 1831 amounted to £101,829; in 1832, to £83,165; in 1833, to £93,816; in 1834, to £111,063; and in 1835, to £120,336. The total receipts of the railway in 1835 amounted to £127,430.

Against this enormous sum must be placed the interest upon an expenditure amounting, in June 1835, to £1,171,386, besides wear and tear of property, and all the expenses of the establishment. In the half year ending at the last mentioned date, the disbursement for expenses amounted to £61,814, including above sixteen thousand for locomotive power, above nine thousand for expense on account of carrying of merchandise, above eight thousand on account of carrying of passengers, above six thousand for maintenance of way, and £12,157 for taxes and rates. So great, nevertheless, have been the profits, that, for every hundred pound share, the proprietors have half-yearly received from four guineas to four pounds ten shillings, up to the latter half of 1835, when they received five pounds, being a return of precisely ten per cent. In June 1834, the company employed sixty-four agents, clerks, and out-lookers, and six hundred and thirty-six engine-men, guards, labourers, and others, whose salaries and wages amounted to eight hundred pounds a week.

Since the main line was brought into operation, many short lines have been opened in connection with it, and the company have recently completed a tunnel, bringing the termination for passengers to a point in the centre of Liverpool, where a suit of offices, in an elegant style of architecture, has been erected, the Liverpool corporation giving two thousand pounds in order that it might be made a decorative object. Several other railways to connect Manchester with places more or less remote have been projected. One branching from the Liverpool and Manchester, at the distance of a mile from the latter town, and connecting it with Bolton and Bury, is in progress. Another has been commenced, on the completion of which, Liverpool, Manchester, Lancaster, Preston, and Wigan, will be connected. An act has been obtained for a third connecting Manchester with Leeds. A fourth is contemplated between Manchester and Sheffield, as are also one called the Manchester and Cheshire Junction, of which the object is to shorten the route to Birmingham and London by the Grand Junction Railway, and one entitled the South Union (a rival to the preceding), which is to pass by Stockport, Macclesfield, and Leek, to Burton-upon-Trent, and thence by other lines to Birmingham and London. But the effects of the success of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway do not stop here. Every where throughout the kingdom, a conviction of the great advantages of railway communication has been impressed, and lines have been projected between all places of importance south of Aberdeenshire. The capital involved by the projects of this kind at present on foot, is not less than forty millions—a fact in itself calculated to give a striking idea of the wealth concentrated in the British islands. Taking into consideration the conviction which exists as to the benefits of railway communication, and observing in what directions the streams of personal intercourse and merchandise chiefly proceed throughout this island, it cannot reasonably be doubted that

lines will soon exist, radiating from London to Bristol—to Birmingham and Manchester (these indeed are in progress)—to Newcastle, and thence by Carlisle to Glasgow, and by Dunbar to Edinburgh—and thence to Glasgow; besides many for cross distances, such as from Glasgow to Ayr, and from Dundee to Arbroath (this is in progress), and to Perth, if not also to Aberdeen.*

THE NORTH POLE GAZETTE.

WHEN Captain Parry's company were wintering in the arctic regions, one of the means of amusement fallen upon for the purpose of cheering—not the long nights, but the long night—for theirs was some six months long—was the publication of a jocular newspaper, under the title of the North Pole Gazette. One of the sheets contained the following whimsical paragraphs:—

We cannot congratulate our readers on any material change in our prospects since our last. The dark clouds which then hung over us remain undispersed, and the most profound gloom prevails. It is, however, consoling to know, though as yet "no pitying ray" bursts on us, that patience and fortitude have carried others triumphantly through similar difficulties, and a night of dreary anxiety has been succeeded by a day of cloudless splendour. That the times are hard, cannot be denied, since with all the exertions we can use, it is no easy task to keep the wolf from the door. Under such circumstances, it cannot excite surprise that the stocks (on board) should be depressed, and we will not disguise the fact that they have been for some time going down. Happily, however, we have still some rum spirits among us, that disdain to recognise care; and though at present they can furnish but cold comfort, yet cold comfort is better than none at all.

ACCIDENTS AND OFFENCES.—Yesterday, Tom Tarwig taking an airing with Jack Junk, happened by chance to thrust his nose within two inches of his comrade's link. Junk perceived that it was pale, and immediately called out, "Splice me, mate! but your bowsprit's going." Tarwig immediately raised his hand to his face, but searched it in vain for his nose. Snow was promptly applied to the part affected; the danger was soon at an end, and Tom could feel his nose again. But for the well-timed efforts of Junk, it is more than probable that Tarwig would have returned with his nose in his pocket, which might have proved a serious inconvenience to that accomplished snuff-taker.

Sam Topsail was brought yesterday morning before Lieutenant Larkish, charged with having purloined some brandy, the property of Dick Drylips, under the following circumstances:—It appears that the brandy being frozen as hard as glass, a diamond was used by the proper officer to cut out the regular allowances of the crew. Dick Drylips, at the dance on Wednesday evening, being about to perform a minuet with a bear, thought it prudent to put two slices of his brandy out of his jacket pocket, from an apprehension that they might be broken by his movements, in which case the smaller particles would have been in danger of being thawed by the warm hug of his partner. He accordingly laid them on the head of a cask on which Sam Topsail was seated. The prisoner at first denied having seen the brandy, but being confronted with Bill Bull's-eye, who saw him drilling holes in one of the casks, with a view of inserting therein the prongs of a fork, for the purpose of toasting it, he was convicted of the fraud, and sentenced to pay the accuser two slices of his next allowance of brandy.

Roger Razorface was accused of cutting and maiming. The facts were these:—Bob Breeze going down to be shaved, was lathered in the usual way. At that moment the cabin door was unfortunately opened, and the soap-suds on his muzzle became in one instant as hard as marble. Razorface tried to thaw the lather with a red-hot poker; but this being objected to by Bob, on account of its making the water boil, which had been laid with the soap in the indenture of his chin, Razorface at last took a chisel and hammer to the other part of his face, and succeeded in getting off the lather and beard, and with it part of the upper lip. It was admitted by Breeze that he objected to the use of the poker, and the magistrate thereupon dismissed the charge, considering the application of the chisel to be an act of his own; and moreover being of opinion, that the chisel in question was not a sharp instrument within the meaning of the act.

THE DRAMA.—A new pantomime was last night brought out at the Arctic Theatre, entitled "The North West Passage; or Harlequin Esquimaux." Our limits will not admit of our entering into the plot of this piece at present. Of course there is a lack of scenery and machinery; but in some instances the local situation of this theatre gives it an advantage over every other. Where, but in the Arctic Theatre, could a palace be exhibited, supported by real icicles, forty feet high, bright as crystal, and thicker than the pillars of Covent Garden portico? Many of the

* We have been indebted for the materials of this paper to a newly published volume, entitled, "Manchester; its Political, Social, and Commercial History, Ancient and Modern; by James Wheeler." London, Whitaker and Co.; Manchester, Love and Barton. We shall probably have further occasion to speak of Mr Wheeler's volume, the matter of which must have required diligence in the collection, as we are sure it is put together with judgment.

tricks are very ingenious, and at the same time quite original. We particularly admired that touch of the magic wand, which converted the *Paphian Queen* into a lump of "unsunned snow."

ORIGINAL POETRY.—Mr HEADITOR, I hopes as how yowl assert the follering: TOM TACKLE.

What tho' the vind blows in my face,
While here that ve is stopping,
I gaily splice the main brace,
And sighs for Poll of Vopping.
Avay with care.—Vy, 'tis a sin
Our peepers to keep mopping,
Because ve here so long has bin,
Avay from Poll of Vopping.
For soon ye shall get home again,
And all their mouths be stopping,
With fine hale, or vith rum and gin,
As I vill Poll of Vopping.

IMPROMPTU.

"I don't like," cries Peter, "a bear skin to wear,
'Tis so awkward it makes peoplo laugh."
"That is true," replies Tom, "but the skin of a bear,
"Than a bare skin is better by half."

THE FINE ARTS.—Jem Capstern has just completed a chalk representation of an Esquimaux engaged in taming a whale. The manner in which the savage uses the harpoon, as a driller of marines would use his cane, is very natural, and the whole picture may be considered as a masterpiece. The chalk exhibition will remain open to-day and to-morrow, when it must positively close, as the deck must be washed on the following morning.

ADVERTISEMENTS.—To be sold, some excellent nose-gloves, lined with woollen, and made to tie behind. Apply to Bobstay.

Superior Nostrils, made of quills and reeds, to be worn with Bobstay's noses, is now on sale. Ax for Sam Shroud's.

WANTED.—A child's Caul. Two slices of brandy for a right earnest one. Bring it to Jerry Jib.

A FEW DAYS IN IRELAND.

THIRD ARTICLE.

HAVING now gratified our curiosity respecting Dublin and the county of Wicklow, we resolved to go at once move into the centre of the south of Ireland, and for this purpose proceeded by the stage-coach to Kilkenny, accomplishing the distance of nearly sixty miles in one day. It was now that we for the first time beheld Ireland in its characteristic aspect. When we had left the city a few miles behind, we began to observe specimens of those wretched mud cabins which abound so much in this neglected land. The surface of the country was itself marked by no striking features, except that of a cultivation much inferior to what prevails in Scotland; but our minds could not fail to be struck with the marks which we every where saw of a want of activity, cheerfulness, and almost of population. For several miles we travelled without meeting or overtaking a single human being. During the whole of this day (and the same might be said of the two which we had spent in Wicklow), we did not see more than two vehicles containing well-dressed persons. The stage-coach in which we now travelled, had only one passenger besides our own little party, and during the whole way it did not pick up a single wayfarer, or any person inclined to travel to an intermediate point on the road. In the towns of Naas, Carlow, and Old Leighlin, which we passed in succession, there were considerable appearances of prosperity and comfort, mingled with a large proportion of the usual poverty; but we nowhere else saw any trace of the middle ranks, and their modest but substantial enjoyments. The few gentlemen's seats and the equally rare towns, seem isolated amidst scenes of poverty and misery, as an Indian fort is hemmed in by the jungle and the forest; and it seems strange that exceptions so small from a state of things so general, should be allowed to maintain their ground. The same phenomenon we found to prevail throughout the whole of the south. Every where the country had the same dispirited and forlorn look; every where did affluence and comfort seem to bear the same proportion to misery. The two-floored slated house of Scotland was not here to be seen—nothing but the eternal earth-walled and windowless cottage, with or without its dung-heap and stagnant pool in front, and the pig looking out at the door. The firm inclosure of stone or hedge, so universal in the neighbouring island, was here rarely or never seen; a low wall of mud, faced perhaps with a few stones, and a line of luxuriant furze along the top, constituted the chief inclosure any where to be seen. The fields contained immense quantities of weeds, and were furrowed in a very irregular manner, the grain and potatoes being in many cases planted on beds, between which there are deep trenches for receiving, not draining, the moisture. Agriculturally, it seemed a country of what in the Scottish Highlands are called small

crofters, or occupants of patches of land. The low style of dressing which we had remarked in Dublin was here abundantly exemplified. Excepting in towns, it was rare to meet a person even decently clad. Rags were universal, the only variety being in the degree of minuteness to which rents and patches were reduced. We saw among females, as well as males, many breaches which a little thread and time could have easily remedied; and many were in rags whose appearance or circumstances were otherwise such as to denote that they could afford something better. Where the active part of the population are ragged, the beggars must of course be extremely so. The curious and ingenious raggedness of some of these poor creatures was striking. It seemed wonderful how they could find their way either into or out of such an incomprehensible labyrinth of fragmentary clothing. We could now readily fathom the sense of the Hibernian mother, who told her son that he would soon not have a pair of breeches to his back. In Ireland, the individuality of garments is confounded. They are so exclusively known in the shape of mere fragments—fragments alike serviceable on any part of the human exterior—that the idea of particular applications is lost sight of. We one day met a man whose hat consisted of at least a dozen pieces, sewed together in something like the usual shape of that article of attire. Among those of the agricultural class who aim at a better external appearance, a coarse frieze coat with metal buttons, corduroy breeches, terminating loosely below the knees, grey woollen stockings, and a tall shabby hat, form a costume sufficiently general to be styled national. The females of the same class are apt to have a tolerable blue duffle cloak, and a white cap close to the head; but the manufactures of Manchester and Paisley are more prevalent in the wilds of Ross-shire and the Zeland islands, than in the luxuriant plains of Ireland. Among numberless other symptoms of a backward and erroneous state of things which fell under our observation, one which struck us with more than common force, was the spectacle of a stout man driving a single pig, or perhaps two sheep, along a road. This occurred frequently, and the low value of human labour in Ireland could not have been more expressively signified.

At a village about half a dozen miles from Dublin, we were surprised, as we sat on a front outside seat (the weather having tempted us from within) by the sudden apparition of a coarse black-bearded man in a red long-skirted coat, who started up beside our feet, like the brown dwarf of old, and, clinging to the vehicle with hands and feet, began to regale us with a song. When he had rattled through two or three rough Irish ditties, he doffed his hat, and, like a minstrel of old, solicited a guerdon. Having obtained a trifle from us, he lost no time in making his way round to the other side, which he did with all the agility of a sailor swinging along the shrouds of a vessel at sea; and he then proceeded to lay our companions under contribution also. On being asked if he had had any potten that morning, "No," said he, "nor Scotchman either," in a moment detecting the nativity of our tongues. We asked who and what he was, to which he replied that he had the honour to be Inspector-General of Roads in this part of the kingdom. The merriment of the poor creature, all shoeless as he was, amused us exceedingly. By and bye, he fell a-chattering in Irish with the coachman, to whom he imparted all the gossip of the village, mentioning, among other matters of like importance, that his "lady" had that morning had her sixth baby. The shirt of this whimsical rogue would have been a certain cure for the Sultan Solymann; but, if we recollect rightly, he was deficient in the article.

At Naas, sixteen miles from Dublin, we were shown the gloomy and massive remains of a castle built by the Earl of Strafford, during his vice-government of Ireland—a striking memorial of that dark and powerful minded man. Here also we saw the first specimen of those huge piles of barracks which are almost everywhere scattered throughout Ireland, not only in the neighbourhood of large seats of population, but amidst peaceful rural scenes, and on the naked upland, conveying so painful an impression of the moral state of this beautiful country. Castle Dermot, thirty-four miles from Dublin, is remarkable for a pretty entire ruin of an ancient abbey, and the castle and parliament-hall of the Dermots, kings of Leinster, whose seat of rule was in this place. Five miles farther on, is Carlow, a large and increasing town, bearing many marks of prosperity, and adorned by some elegant and conspicuous modern buildings, among which are a court-house, a Catholic cathedral, an infirmary, and a lunatic asylum. In the evening we reached Kilkenny, and lodged ourselves in the Hibernian Hotel.

Kilkenny—the inland capital of Ireland, as it is sometimes called—is a city of about thirty thousand inhabitants, containing some good streets, and delightfully situated upon the river Nore, which affords some beautiful scenes of the softer kind. Almost within the town, and overhanging the river, is the august seat of the Ormond family—Kilkenny Castle—the view of which from the bridge immediately below, with its huge towers and battlements, originally founded by Strongbow, is one of the finest things that any where met our eyes throughout Ireland. The shops in the centre of the city present an elegant appearance, and make a display of goods such as no city of the size in England could be expected to excel.

There is in this a contrariety to the appearance of the surrounding districts, which we cannot pretend to explain. But Kilkenny has also its share of misery. In the outskirts, there are numerous lines of mean cottages, containing a dense pauper labouring population, as if a few rural hamlets had been removed from their natural situations, and planted down beside this aspiring city, for the purpose of mortifying its pride. We also found that the alleys adjacent to the finest streets contained hordes of the same children of sorrow, sunk in filth and wretchedness. It was market-day when we inspected Kilkenny, and many beggars and unemployed labourers were abroad, mingling with the substantial citizens, the smart city ladies, and the country people in their best attire. It was strange to observe the indifference with which wealth and elegance had become accustomed to regard these mean associations. Mendicants stood in well-established rows at the doors of the gayest shops, or, pressing in, would unchidden assail the lady customers at the counter. The pressure and jostling of the ragged crowd seemed to give the better-dressed people hardly the least concern. Among the sights which distressed us most, was a row of labourers standing along a wall in the hope of employment. Their ragged clothes, bare feet and legs, and faces displaying the blue tinge of cold and famine, showed that work and wages were to them unwonted blessings. We saw at the same time numerous proofs that the lower Irish are not deficient in either the desire of making an honest penny, or in the power of devising expedients for accomplishing that object. The streets, especially near the market-house, were filled with individuals of both sexes and of all ages, either carrying about small articles of various kinds in baskets, or exhibiting them upon stalls. Among the articles thus exposed were necklaces of beads, crosses, and certain little books, necessary for the Catholic forms of devotion; the novelty of which, to our eyes, gave the whole scene quite a foreign air. At one of the stalls, kept by a stout florid girl, we purchased two or three of the initiatory school-books heretofore used by the humbler population of Ireland—wretched alike in paper, in typography, and in matter, but apparently only so in consequence of poverty. In the spelling-book, every third or fourth word was imperfect, either from the mistake of the compositor, or the ink not having taken effect on the paper. To those who have hitherto been unable to provide themselves with better books, the cheap little volumes furnished by the national board must be a real blessing.

We spent part of the forenoon in inspecting the cathedral, which contains many curious old monuments, and is rendered further attractive by a round tower, which springs up close beside one of the transepts. From the cathedral we proceeded to the Presentation Convent, which is one of the established objects of curiosity to strangers. This convent is of comparatively modern institution, and contains about fifteen nuns. Externally, it appears nothing remarkable, being only a plain white building, behind a wall ranging with the public street. Having never before entered a nunnery, and being acquainted only with what Mrs Radcliffe's novels and other romances have related respecting them, we were somewhat surprised when, after sitting for a few minutes in a plainly furnished parlour, a young gentleman of engaging appearance, though somewhat oddly dressed, entered with a smiling welcome, and in two minutes put us as much at our ease as if we had been only calling upon an ordinary acquaintance. By this lady we were conducted to a garden behind the house, containing walks for the recreation of the inmates, and the usual variety of fruit and flower. Then we proceeded to the chapel, which consists of a lofty upper room, fitted up with altar, organ, and private seats for the nuns; the whole in a light and elegant style of decoration, without being in the least gaudy. While conducting us through these and other parts of the establishment, our guide indulged in a style of conversation in no respect different from that of her ordinary countrywomen of the same rank; and the impression which she made by her cheerful kindness and affability, was only such as to make us regret, that one so capable of adorning society should have thought it a duty to withdraw herself from it. We learned that she belonged to an affluent mercantile family in the city, and had been a sister of the order for six years—that is, ever since she had attained the age at which the vows could be taken. So young, so fair, so gay, and yet *here*—so near to the scenes of her childhood and the friends amidst whom nature had planted her, and yet abstracted from them all, to be immured for ever in one secluded spot—assured as we were that the case was a violation of natural propriety, we could not without a compassionate admiration behold one who, for the sake of an abstract sentiment, however erroneous, could forfeit so much of what all human beings are inclined to appreciate. The most interesting part of the establishment remained below stairs, where, in a series of roomy chambers, we found the whole strength of the convent engaged in teaching *five hundred poor girls* to read and sew, without fee and without reward. This was, to us, a sight as unexpected as it was in itself gratifying. So much of pure good-doing, for the sake of good alone—there was something more than self-denial here! We were that these ladies had kept a gratis school for many years, without receiving any external aid till lately, when the national board had given them twenty pounds a-year and a few school-books. Of course there is no religious instruction given, that de-

partment of education being left to the pastors of the various denominations of the children, at another time and in other places. The modes of teaching pursued by the nuns appeared good, and the proficiency of the pupils, in at least the sewing and tambouring departments, was very conspicuous. The children seemed healthy and happy, tolerably well clothed, and greatly superior in intelligence of aspect to the males of the same age, whom we saw in other gratis schools. Their superior appearance, however, was the less wonderful, when we were afterwards informed that the benevolence of the nuns was not confined to the mental training and instruction of the children, but that a liberal dispensation of both food and clothing was, under the circumstances, nearly unavoidable, and actually practised to a great extent.

We were next conducted to the remains of a Dominican Abbey, part of which is fitted up as a Catholic place of worship, though at present disused. Learning that, in a house connected with the ruins, there resided a friar who had been wont to officiate here, we sent him our compliments, and a respectful request that he would take the trouble to show us the place, expecting, in our ignorance, that he should presently see, evolving from some antique doorway, a reverend-looking man, in a girdled gown, shaven crown, and bare feet. Our surprise was accordingly very great, when a pleasant gentleman-like man, between youth and middle age, in a blue surcoat and ordinary round hat, came in and addressed us with the most this-worldly civility imaginable. By this gentleman we were shown every thing worth inspecting among the ruins, which, indeed, was not much. After some general conversation, we took a grateful leave, not without some self-accusings respecting the ignorant and erroneous impressions we had heretofore entertained respecting the external circumstances of both nuns and friars.

We now turned from these memorials of a bye-past age, to inspect the Ormond Cloth Factory, which, instead of being at a stand-still, as a late traveller represented it,* we found in full operation, employing about a hundred and forty persons in the preparation of coarse cloths for the home market and exportation to Canada. Rare as such establishments are in the south of Ireland, it was pleasing to find that prosperity smiled at least upon this one, which may yet be the prototype of hundreds. The young people employed in spinning, and attending to other parts of the machinery, make sixpence a-day, which is nearly the average wages of full-grown men in Ireland; weavers make six shillings and sixpence, one week with another. We were also taken to see one of several large breweries, which have been for some years carried on with success in Kilkenny.

THE OAKLEIGH SHOOTING CODE.

WE are no great shooters—indeed, it is as well to confess at once, that we never, in the whole course of our lives, shot so much as a poor sparrow, let alone a grouse, pheasant, hare, or partridge, although we have helped in our day to eat not a few of these winged and furred creatures. Ignorant as we are in the matter of guns, dogs, powder-flasks, &c., we should like above all things to spend a day or two with Tom Oakleigh, one of the first sporting men in Derbyshire, or North Staffordshire, ay, or perhaps in England, and that is a wide word. The exercise arising from such a *play* would be worth a world of medicine. Besides, Tom is a man of letters. As we have already mentioned, he has lately published a volume of Hints to Shooters, called the OAKLEIGH SHOOTING CODE. We would advise all our sporting friends to bag this admirable digest, the first time they see it in any bookseller's shop; or—why—as well order it at once. It is the best thing of the kind extant. By way of sample of the contents, we give the following scraps:—

ADVICE ON FIRST TAKING THE FIELD.

The best time to learn to shoot is the early part of September, when birds are tame and abundant. He should take out only one dog—a slow, staunch, old dog, and be accompanied by a friend or gamekeeper. When the dog points, he must prepare; and, as the birds rise, look steadily at them. If they be more than twenty-five paces distant, or there be any obstruction, he may let them go. If they present a fair mark, he must make his selection—a single bird—and shoot coolly at it. During the first fortnight, he should not shoot at any birds except such as are pointed before being flushed. He should use only the left barrel of a double gun, and leave practising with the second barrel till a future day. If he do not feel collected, nothing will contribute more to the removal of any nervous feeling than reducing the quantity of charge. The eighth part of an ounce of powder, and one ounce of shot No. 7, and very slight wadding, will be a sufficient charge, the shots being made at twenty-five paces distance.

QUANTITY OF SHOT AND POWDER.

The quantity of shot required in charging is not

* We in general found the statements and descriptions of this traveller (Mr Inglis) correct; but in the present case he had certainly shown a culpable degree of negligence. On calling at the factory, he had found it idle, as it always is for a while in summer, and, not taking the trouble to inquire further, had let it down as abandoned to ruin. It is in reality thriving.

dependent on the length, but on the gauge, of the barrel. Every barrel of the same gauge, be its length what it may, requires the same weight of shot. The quantity of powder required to produce the most effective discharge is dependent as much on the length as on the calibre of the piece. The longer the barrel or the larger the calibre, the greater quantity of powder is necessary, is a rule which generally, but not in all cases, holds good. Perhaps, more correctly speaking, the quantity of powder required depends on two things. 1st, On the capacity, whether in length or diameter, of the interior of the barrel, for only a limited quantity of powder can ignite in a given space, in a given time; and the period of time which intervenes between the fall of the hammer and the exit of the shot from the barrel, is very brief. 2dly, On the degree of resistance offered by the narrowing of the barrel in any part above where the charge lies; for instance, a barrel one inch in diameter at the breech, and only half an inch at the muzzle, would require only half the quantity of powder that a barrel half an inch in diameter at the breech, and one inch at the muzzle, would. The longer the barrel, the greater time is there allowed for the powder to ignite before the shot makes its escape. The quantity of powder required is dependent also on the form of the breech. If every barrel were a true cylinder, the quantum of charge might be reduced to mathematical certainty, as then every barrel of the same gauge and length would be charged alike. But as barrels are now made, the charge can only be ascertained by experiment.

SHOOTING AT BIRDS ON THE WING.

When a bird rises near to the shooter, he should fix his eye steadfastly upon it, until it is nearly twenty yards distant from him; then throw his gun up quickly to his shoulder, shut his left eye, and look straight down the rim or sight-plate, until he has brought his eye, the breech, the metal sight, and the bird, in a line. The bird will be about twenty-five yards distant by the time he has perfected his aim. He should not continue following the bird after having once brought the gun to bear upon it. He must keep his eye wide open, be deliberate, and the very moment he covers the object, fire. A deal of this, but not all, any one who has the use of his limbs, and no defect in his sight, can do; but few persons can perform the last part of the operation, simple as it may appear, scientifically. It is the finger that errs. The hand ever follows the eye; they do not act in concert; they should act simultaneously, not suffering the least interval of time to elapse between the taking the aim and pulling the trigger. That is the universal error. The aim taken by the eye is true, the judgment of the distance and allowance accordingly is correct, the barrel is properly elevated, the object is within the range; but ere the hammer falls, there is a momentary pause; the piece is stationary, the object is on the move, the finger is too late! If the shooter winks, or finches, or starts, from trepidation or anxiety, he will shoot above the object; if he pause but for an instant after covering the object, however slight the check, the shot falls below or behind the mark. There is, however, a something more than the mere mechanical process requisite; nerve, presence of mind, coolness, and decision, must be combined with a knowledge of shooting, or the mere science—the artificial and acquired part—will avail nothing. The habit of missing seldom arises from ignorance of the use of a fowling-piece, but frequently from excitement, trepidation, anxiety, want of command of temper, want of self-confidence, or the being over-confident, absence of mind, the effects of a previous night's debauch, want of rest occasioned by travelling, or some other cause operating upon the nervous system. All these should be guarded against, as far as circumstances may admit; and whatever seems best calculated to restore a calm state of mind and firmness, should be resorted to. It sometimes happens that a good shot will miss half a dozen times in succession, and cannot account for his want of success, which, if properly investigated, might in all likelihood be traced to some of the foregoing sources. The main cause is generally overlooked, and the fowling-piece or powder is condemned, when the fault rests with the shooter!

TAKING AIM.

The shooter, when learning, should never aim directly at the body of a hare on foot, or a bird on the wing. His mark should be a head, the legs, or a wing, if within twenty yards. When farther off, he should make some allowance, according to the distance and speed of the object moving. His aim should be at the head of a bird rising or crossing—the legs of a bird flushed on an eminence, and moving downwards from him—the wing of a bird flying from him in an oblique direction. His aim should be at the head of a hare, in whatever way it may be moving. The same rules apply when the object is more than twenty paces distant from the shooter, making allowance for the speed. Thus, for a partridge crossing, the allowance of aim before it with a detonator, at twenty paces, will be one inch; at thirty paces, two inches; at fifty paces, five inches; at fifty-five paces, seven inches. Half this allowance will be proper when the bird moves in an oblique direction. When an object moves directly from the shooter, at more than twenty paces distance, he should fire a little above it. The young sportsman should learn to shoot high enough: he will rarely shoot over a bird. When a bird or hare approaches the shooter directly, he should not aim at it

until it has passed him, or has turned aside. The moment it has altered its course, the gun should be brought up, and no time should be lost in firing. When a flint lock is used, the allowance must be greater, but it will depend chiefly on the smartness of the lock and quickness of the powder.

When a covey or brood rises, the shooter should fix his eye on one bird, and shoot at that bird only. He should not be diverted from it, by other birds rising nearer to him while he was bringing up his gun, unless the bird he first set his eye upon be decidedly out of all reasonable distance, so as to render the chance of killing exceedingly remote. By observing this rule, the shooter is not only more certain of bringing down his game, but he will more frequently kill the old bird—a desideratum, for two reasons: first, because he will in all probability disperse the covey, which being done, any sportsman may, without difficulty, bag a few brace; and secondly, because the old birds make a better show in the game-bag.

The practised shot, when at a proper distance, will sometimes, though it is unsportsmanlike, fire at a covey immediately as they rise, before they are fairly on the wing, and, without aiming at any individual bird, bring down two or three. And sometimes he will make a shot by flanking a brood or covey. The birds being on the wing, come upon him suddenly, and make a simultaneous wheel; he takes them on the turn, when for a moment—and but for a moment—half the covey are in a line, and floors them rank and file. The novice will do better to single out a bird.

REQUISITES FOR GROUSE-SHOOTING.

Grouse-shooting is glorious sport! but it is not seldom that it is alloyed by the disappointment consequent upon an unreasonable expectation of success; or by the absence of some trifle necessary to the shooter's comfort, which a little forethought would have provided. The first requisite for a grouse-shooter is patience: the next, a determination to make himself comfortable under any circumstances; to be content with any luck; to put up with any inconveniences: the third, circumspection, or a sufficient degree of foresight to provide a suitable equipment before leaving home; for if his accoutrements and apparatus be not complete on his arrival at shooting-quarters, the probability is that they cannot then be made so. Furthermore, let his expectations of sport be moderate; let him not be too sanguine; and if he do not kill many birds, he will at least not meet with disappointment. Let him not envy the success of his more fortunate rivals; let him not fall into the cockney error of supposing that killing game alone constitutes sport. A moment's consideration will convince him that the grouse-shooter in August, and the cock-shooter in December, are not induced to toil by the pleasure they experience in merely slaughtering birds. If it were so, they would take equal delight in shooting pigeons from the trap; but pigeon-shooters are a very different class of persons from grouse-shooters. Pigeon-shooting is generally a betting speculation. The shooter who traverses the heathery wilderness, the warm valley, the clough, the glen, the brake, and the covert, in turn, has, though he may not be aware of the extent of it, a community of feeling with the objects around him, which irresistibly leads him on. He feels a thousand undefinable associations with the country he traverses—a thousand sympathies "which he cannot express, but cannot all conceal," "where rise the mountains there to him are friends," "the hills are unto him companionship," and "the sounding cataract haunts him like a passion!"

Before the shooter leaves a place where something of civilisation exists—where gay shops and accomplished artisans are in readiness to supply real wants and create imaginary ones—for a clime where nothing but barrenness prevails, he should ascertain that nothing be forgotten, for in this early part of the season, even the old sportsman sometimes forgets things needful. He should not, amongst other matters, omit examining his copper-caps, for should they not fit the pivots, the cap on the second barrel will fly off while the first barrel is fired; and a misfire on the moors, when birds are shy and scarce, is too much for the patience or nerves of any man. Innumerable trivial vexatious mishaps of this description will occur on the 12th of August, unless the sportsman provide against them well. A tight shoe, or, what is worse, a slender shoe, want of refreshment, too warm clothing on a sultry day, a lock out of repair, or an untied fowling-piece, may ruffle his temper, and so tend to the rendering him unfit to take a deliberate aim.

THE GROUSE-SHOOTER'S EQUIPMENT.

A catalogue of some of the articles necessary to the grouse-shooter's equipment may not be unserviceable. Dogs; fowling-piece, in case or bag; two extra pivots; a pivot-pricker; pivot-wrench; gun-rod, or cleaner; a small bottle of olive-oil; some linen cloth and leather; powder-flask; dram-flask; shot-belt; a canister of powder; a quantity of shot, various sizes; a few pairs of woollen stockings; strong laced boots, or strong shoes and gaiters; dark shooting-dress; copper-caps and box; wadding; screw-turret; spring-cramp; a punch for cutting waddings; shoe-oil; straps, collars, couples, and cords, for leading and tying up dogs; dog-whistle; dog-whip; a pocket-knife, with an instrument attached for unlacing boots; a pen-knife; a pocket-comb; some cord or string for tying up game; hampers, in which grouse may be packed between layers of heath; sealing-wax, and seal to mark

birds when sent by a coach or carrier; game-certificate; card of permission, or other authority to produce to the gamekeepers; sandwiches; cigars; Prometheus; brandy. This bill of fare may not suit every one, there being few but would omit some of the articles, and fewer that would be content without adding something to the list, since we have all our tastes and fancies.

DOGS FED WHILE BEATING.

After beating four or five hours, oat-cake, in small quantities, should be given to the dogs at intervals throughout the day, to enable them to perform their work. A system of rewards and punishments will be attended with useful effects: the reward being a mouthful of oat-cake, the punishment a few lashes with the dog-whip. In the distribution of rewards, care should be taken to do impartial justice, for dogs are susceptible of being slighted. They should be fed equally, unless there be some special cause apparent for variance.

SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT.

THERE cannot be a more pleasing task for the man who believes that human nature is progressive, than to compare the past age with the present—to compare the morality, the amusements, the taste, and the general character of the people of the former period, with those of our own time. The improvement that has taken place is so evident, that it is only here and there we meet with persons willing to dispute it. It may be remarked, however, that few appear capable of appreciating the change as it deserves.—First, with respect to habits of intemperance among the people: The number of gallons of spirits used in England and Wales, in 1742, exceeded twenty millions. The population at this period was about six millions; in 1832, the population had increased to above fourteen millions. If, therefore, the same demand for ardent spirits had continued, nearly three times as much would be required now as at the first-mentioned period; instead of which, in 1833, the consumption of spirits was about twenty-six millions of gallons, *only three millions more than at the former period*, when the population was but little more than a third of what it is in the present day. [Hence, there is far less drunkenness now than formerly.]

The amusements of the people may be considered a fair standard of their morality. When their recreations are of a sensual character, and we find intellectual pleasures neglected, we may reasonably conclude that the morals of the people are not of the strictest kind. When we compare the last century with the present, how much may we congratulate ourselves on the improvement which has taken place! In some classes it is more obvious than in others, but all have evidently improved. It is, however, to the middle and working classes—the great body of the people—that our observations will principally apply; and in the change that has taken place in their amusements we have indeed great cause for gratulation. The beastly and disgusting "sports" in which they formerly indulged, have given place to recreations of a very different character. Bull-baiting, that rare specimen of "Old English sports," the decline of which some persons are foolish enough to regret, is now unknown in London. As a specimen of the scenes which usually occurred in pursuing this sport, we think we cannot do better than give the following extract, which we met with in looking over an old magazine the other day. It states, that "On Monday, January 13th, 1794, a very fine bullock was turned out of Smithfield; after breaking halter, twenty or thirty at his tail, he made a point to Islington, but was turned back before he cleared St John's-street, crossed Wood's Close, went down Goswell-street, turned to the left, and skirted Old-street, where he began to show sport. After goring a woman and tossing a boy, he made for the City-road, ran through Old-street-road, and crossed Shoreditch, where the pursuit was joined by a number of Spitalians; being close pressed, he ran into a dust-yard and killed an old sow. After breaking cover, he butted through Bishopsgate-street, and made for the Exchange, where he frightened a number of bulls and bears, and insinuated his horns between the ribs of a Dutch merchant; thence he took through Cheapside to the Fleet Market, where he overturned the fish and fruit stalls. After which he came back to Smithfield, coursed through Long-lane, Barbican, turned to the right, and away through Fore-street, to Moorfields, where two fresh dogs were let loose, who pinned him. He was haltered, and dragged to a slaughter-house, where he was killed."

Some persons complain that our old manly sports are quite forgotten. The suppression of such disgraceful occurrences as the one just mentioned, is certainly very much to be lamented! Why should old women and children now, have their lives protected more than formerly, at the expense of this "fine Old English sport?" And if our forefathers did not think it brutal and cowardly to torment a poor beast, why should we? This sport has, however, passed away, and with it some others of a similar nature—we wish we could say all. Cock-fighting, dog-fighting, and that most disgusting of all "English sports," pugilism, have not yet entirely passed away; but they are only patronised by gentlemen! The middle and working classes seek other amusements; and we may confidently anticipate, that in a few years all these low-minded, barbarous recreations will be deservedly

despised. As a proof of the change that has taken place, let the following account speak for itself:—

"A SINGULAR RACE.—Nov. 15, 1792.—About seven o'clock yesterday morning, two waiters belonging to the Cannon Coffeehouse ran a race round St James's Park, quite naked, for a wager of one guinea. The loser was beat by a yard and a half only; and the winner came to the place where they started in the course of five minutes and a half. The race was strongly contested, and afforded much amusement to a great number of spectators."

Such an occurrence as this, it is true, could only take place while the police of the metropolis were in a wretchedly inefficient condition; but we sincerely believe, that however bad may be the morality of the lower order of persons at the present time, yet even they would be ashamed of outraging public decency in the manner described.

The amusements of the people now are of a very different kind; they enjoy pleasures of a very different description. Let those who doubt this, visit one of the many Mechanics' Institutions in or about London, some evening, when a lecture on science or literature is delivered—let him mark the profound attention with which the information given is received—let him observe the mechanics and their note-books, and then compare this state of things with that which has passed away—we trust for ever. A taste for the fine arts is also becoming daily stronger amongst the great body of the community. The general and increasing desire for reading is, however, one of the most extraordinary features of the age. This is a direct evidence of the improvement of the people. The number of periodicals published in London, weekly and monthly, is beyond calculation: we mean literary works—those which do not notice passing events, and therefore have none of the attractions of the newspaper. The demand for the latter kind of reading is, however, quite as great, perhaps greater, than for the former; and this desire is shown, too, by a class of persons who hitherto have never been considered a portion of the reading public. In addition to all these proofs of increasing intelligence, what shall we say of the Mechanics' Institutions and Mutual Instruction Societies, if we do not admit that they evidence the progress of society? Can we believe that the vast stores of knowledge that have been thrown open to the people by these means have been productive of no beneficial results? It is impossible. No man can reasonably deny the inevitable conclusion that must press upon the mind when considering these things, namely, that the people have increased in knowledge—have become wiser—have become happier—and will become so more and more.—*The London Magazine and Journal of Educational Institutions, October 1836.*

CURIOSITIES IN THE ARTS.

Petrus Ramus tells us of a wooden eagle and an iron fly, made by Regiomontanus, a famous mathematician of Nuremberg, whereby the first flew forth out of the city, aloft in the air, met the Emperor Maximilian a good way off, coming towards it; and, having saluted him, returned again, waiting on him to the city gates. The second, at a feast, whereto he had invited his familiar friends, flew forth from his hand, and, taking a round, returned thither again, to the great astonishment of the beholders; both of which the excellent pen of the noble Du Bartas rarely expressed.

In the twentieth year of Queen Elizabeth, Mark Scalliot, a blacksmith, made a lock, consisting of eleven pieces of iron, steel, and brass, all which, together with a pipe-key to it, weighed but one grain of gold. He also made a chain of gold, consisting of forty-three links, wherewith having fastened the lock and key before mentioned, he put the chain about a flea's neck, which drew them all with ease. All these together, lock and key, chain and flea, being weighed, the weight of them was but one grain and a half.

Myroscides was also excellent in that kind of workmanship. He wrought, out of ivory, a carriage, with four wheels, and as many horses, in so small a compass that a fly might cover them all with her wings. The same man made a ship, with all her tackling to it, so small that a bee might hide it with her wings.

Oswaldus Northingus, the most excellent artisan of this or any former ages, made sixteen hundred dishes of turned ivory, all perfect and complete in every part, yet so small, thin, and slender, that all of them were inclosed at once in a cup turned out of a pepper-corn of the common bigness. Johannes Carolus Shad, of Middelbrach, carried this wonderful work with him to Rome, showed it to Pope Paul the Fifth, who saw and counted them all by the help of a pair of spectacles; they were so little as to be almost invisible to the eye. He then gave liberty to as many as would see them, amongst whom were Gaspar Scipiolus, and Johannes Faber, of Bamberg, physician, in Rome.

Johannes Baptista Ferrarius, a Jesuit, showed openly, canons of wood, with their carriages, wheels, and all other military furniture, small and slender as you must think, for twenty-five of these, together with thirty cups, turned out of wood, and neatly made, were altogether contained and included in one single pepper-corn, which yet was as big as a common bigness.

At Tibur, or Tivoli, near Rome, in the gardens of Hippolitus d'Este, Cardinal of Ferrara, there are representations of sundry birds, sitting on the tops of trees, which, by hydraulic art, and secret conveyances of water through the trunks and branches of the trees, are made to sing and clap their wings; but, at the sudden appearance of an owl out of a bush of the same artifice, they immediately become all mute and silent. It was the work of Claudius Gallus, as Posevinius informs us.—*Old Scrap-Book.*

A STORM IN THE ORENEYS.

If the fourth-hued god fortune to be in Orkney during a storm, he will cause to regret the absence of some of the softer and more common beauties of landscape, in contemplation of the most sublime spectacle which he ever witnessed. By repairing at such a time to the weather shore, particularly if it be the west side, he will behold waves of the magnitude and force of which he could not have previously formed any adequate conception, tumbling across the Atlantic like monsters of the deep—their heads erect, their manes streaming in the wind, roaring and foaming as with rage, till each discharges such a Niagara flood against the opposing precipices, as makes the rocks tremble to their foundations; while the sheets of water that immediately succeed, as if from artillery, hundreds of feet above their summits, deluge the surrounding country, and fall like showers on the op-

posite side of the islands. All the springs within a mile of the weather coast are rendered brackish for some days after such a storm. Those living half a mile from the precipice, declare that the earthen floors of their cottages are shaken by the concussion of the waves. Rocks that two or three men could not lift are washed about, even on the tops of cliffs which are between sixty and a hundred feet above the surface of the sea when smooth; and detached masses of rock, of an enormous size, are well known to have been carried a considerable distance between high and low water-mark. On visiting the West Craig some days after a recent storm, sea insects are to be found abundant on the hills near to them, though about a hundred feet high.—*Newspaper paragraph.*

LIGHT PRODUCED BY FRICTION.

Light may be produced in the dark, by rubbing two pieces of white sugar against each other. Silice or flint is a preferable substance for producing this effect; but a still better substance is the quartz or candy stone found in such quantities in almost all parts of Scotland. It is curious that a sulphurous smell accompanies the rubbing of two pieces of quartz. By this process sufficient light may be obtained to distinguish the time of night by a watch. The most curious circumstance respecting the process is, that the same effect takes place when the pieces of quartz are rubbed under water.—*The same.*

THE FOUNTAIN.

[From the works of Wordsworth.]

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true—
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew," said I, "let us match
This water's pleasant tune,
With some old border song, or catch,
That suits a summer's noon;

Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes,
Which thou last April made."

In silence Matthew lay and eyed
The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old man replied,
The grey-haired man of glee:

"Down to the vale this water steers,
How merrily it goes!
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

And here on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think,
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears,
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay,
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away,
Than what it leaves behind.

The blackbird in the summer trees,
The lark upon the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With nature never do they wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free:

But we are pressed by heavy lays;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there is one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my friend, are almost gone;
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains!
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains.

And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee!"
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
"Alas, that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain side,
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide,
And through the woods we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's Rock,
We sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

MILTON'S WATCH.

A poor family in England received a box from America, as part of the effects of an aged relative, whose ancestors had emigrated to that country, soon after the time of the Commonwealth: the box contained several coins of the reigns of Elizabeth, James, and Charles I., and a few of the Protectorate, but none of a later date. With the coins there was an old watch, and the family to whom the bequest came being indigent, sold the whole to a silversmith, who was also a watchmaker. The purchaser gave the full price for the coins, but refused to give more for the watch than the value of the silver case, 3s. 6d. The works, with the face on (which looked like iron), were left in a drawer frequently opened. After a while the friction on the face showed it to be silver, with an inscription on it. This being deciphered by clearing the metal, was found to be "Johani Miltono, 1621," and contained also the name of the maker, a person in Pope's Head-alley, London, whose name appears in the tables of the Watchmakers' Company for that period. The watch is well made for the time, and would seem an appropriate present for a young gentleman on entering life. The present possessor had it as a token of gratitude for some former favour from the silversmith, and the relic has become an object of inquiry for purchase at a considerable price for the British Museum.

HAPPINESS OF CHILDREN.

Children may teach us one blessed, one enviable art—the art of being easily happy. Kind nature has given to them that useful power of accommodation to circumstances, which compensates for many external disadvantages, and it is only by injudicious management that it is lost. Give him but a moderate portion of food and kindness, and the peasant's child is happier than the duke's; free from artificial wants, unsatiated by indulgence, all nature ministers to his pleasures; he can carve out felicity from a bit of hazel twig, or fish for it successfully in a puddle. I love to hear the boisterous joy of a troop of ragged urchins, whose cheap playthings are nothing more than mud, snow, sticks, or oyster-shells; or to watch the quiet enjoyment of a half-clothed, half-washed fellow of four or five years old, who sits with a large rusty knife and a lump of bread and bacon at his father's door, and might move the envy of an alderman.—*Dublin Penny Journal.*

INTOXICATING LIQUORS.

Louis XII. of France first gave permission to distil spirits on a large scale. So terrific were the effects, twenty-two years afterwards, that Francis, his successor, was obliged, for the safety of his subjects, to enact a law, that the drunkard who remained incorrigible, after severe monitory punishments, should suffer amputation of the ears, and be banished from the kingdom. How much more wisely would Francis have acted, if, instead of banishing the drunkard, he had banished the pernicious material of drunkenness! Let us take another example: Sweden was a temperate country, on account of ardent spirits being, to a great extent, prevented from coming into ordinary use. In 1783, however, Gustavus king of Sweden gave permission for opening spirit-shops in all the villages of his kingdom. His object was to increase his revenue, and that object he apparently for a time accomplished; for immediately ardent spirits were loaded with fictitious excises, by those who loved them, though bread and other necessities of life were considerably higher than during the preceding year, the poor in that quarter of the town where the chief part resided, were apparently more comfortable, paid their rents more regularly, and were better fed, than at any period for some years before, even though they had not the benefit of extensive charities. This can only be accounted for by their being denied the indulgence of gin, which had become in a great measure inaccessible from its very high price. It may be fairly concluded, that the money formerly spent in purchasing liquor had been applied to the purchase of provisions, and other necessities, to a great amount. The effect of their being deprived of this baneful liquor was also evident in their more orderly conduct. Quarrels and assaults were less frequent, and they resorted seldom to the pawnbrokers' shops; and yet, during the chief part of this period, bread was 15d. the quarter loaf, and meat higher than the preceding year.—*Visitor.*

It is mentioned by Colquhoun, in his work on the police of London, as a curious and important fact, that, during the period when distilleries were stopped in 1795 and 1796, though bread and every necessary of life were considerably higher than during the preceding year, the poor in that quarter of the town where the chief part resided, were apparently more comfortable, paid their rents more regularly, and were better fed, than at any period for some years before, even though they had not the benefit of extensive charities. This can only be accounted for by their being denied the indulgence of gin, which had become in a great measure inaccessible from its very high price. It may be fairly concluded, that the money formerly spent in purchasing liquor had been applied to the purchase of provisions, and other necessities, to a great amount. The effect of their being deprived of this baneful liquor was also evident in their more orderly conduct. Quarrels and assaults were less frequent, and they resorted seldom to the pawnbrokers' shops; and yet, during the chief part of this period, bread was 15d. the quarter loaf, and meat higher than the preceding year.—*Visitor.*

MUSICAL KALEIDOSCOPE.

Some years ago, an attempt was made—it was said, successfully—to produce tunes on a principle not unlike that which the kaleidoscope was made to produce carpet and shawl patterns. The materials employed for the purpose consisted of prepared cards, on each of which was a bar of an air was arranged according to a certain rhythm and key. Four packs of these cards, marked A, B, C, and D, were mingled together, and the cards were drawn and arranged before a performer at random. Thus an original air was obtained. The plan was said to succeed particularly well in waltzes.

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